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Echoes From the Field.

Evening Grosbeak Near Palo Alto. Notes in the January CONDOR indicate a general invasion of the coast valleys by flocks of grosbeaks (*Coccothraustes v. montanus*.) As none are recorded from the San Francisco peninsula, I will note two males and four females, taken by Mr. T. J. Hoover on November 25, now in my collection. These specimens were secured from a flock on the lower San Francisquito Creek where they were feeding in the willows. Mr. Hoover states that since the above date he has seen several flocks in the vicinity of Palo Alto.

RICHARD C. MCGREGOR, Oakland Cal.

Mice as Enemies of Ground-nesting Birds. The carnivorous habits of chipmunks as related in the recent issues of THE CONDOR were very interesting to me, though I believe mice are far more guilty. Mice are a perfect pest to ground-builders in this country, as they burrow into the ground several yards away from the nest and then tunnel until they reach the bottom of the nest.

They then dig upward into the nest and carry the eggs into their tunnel to eat. I have often found broken and unbroken eggs several feet from the nest in a burrow. I have never actually seen mice do this, but the tunnels are much too small for anything else. The Ruffed Grouse (*Bonasa umbellus sabinii*) are the worst sufferers that I have yet found, and their eggs are the largest that I have seen destroyed in this manner. All the small ground-builders suffer more or less.

J. H. BOWLES, Tacoma, Wash.

Notes From Oakland and Vicinity. In the gulches back of Oakland birds have been exceptionally numerous this winter, some species appearing in numbers such as are rarely known here. I might note especially that during the months of December and January I saw five Townsend's Warblers (*Dendroica townsendi*) in one gulch; three of these were together in the same bush.

In different places in Oakland and Berkeley I saw four Western Winter Wrens, (*Anorthura h. pacifica*) a very unusual occurrence. The Red-breasted Nuthatch (*Sitta canadensis*) was found, but in smaller numbers than two years ago when they were comparatively numerous. Audubon's Warblers (*D. auduboni*) seem less common than last year.

The California Woodpecker (*Melanerpes f. bairdi*) is quite numerous in the oaks around the University grounds; much more so than for some years. The Western Golden-crowned Kinglet (*Regulus satrapa olivaceus*) has been quite common in flocks in Oakland and Berkeley.

JOHN M. WILLARD, Oakland, Cal.

Occurrence of the Black Brant and American Goldeneye in Los Angeles Co., Cal. The twentieth century was opened in a very satisfactory manner on the morning of Jan. 1st. when Mr. E. R. Hull presented to the writer a handsome pair of *Branta nigricans*, shot at the Bolso Chico Club grounds near Newport, on that date. These, the first actual specimens taken in the territory covered by Grinnell's list, confirm the statement made therein that it is an occasional visitor along our coast. At one time the Black Brant was a much sought-for game bird about San Diego Bay, eighty miles south but of recent years has decreased rapidly in numbers and is now only occasionally taken.

Another interesting take is that of a pair of *Clangula clangula americana* shot at the same place on Jan. 5, by Dr. A. Fenyés. Mr. Grinnell notes in his list a single specimen of the American Goldeneye taken in 1894. All these birds have found their way into my collection. F. S. DAGGETT, Pasadena, Cal. Jan. 8, 1901.

Capture of Another White-throated Sparrow. I have an adult female White-throated

Sparrow (*Zonotrichia albicollis*) taken in the canyon at Pescadero, San Mateo Co., Cal. on December 29, 1900. This I believe is an unusual occurrence.

The Western Winter Wrens (*Anorthura h. pacifica*) were very common, thirteen being seen in two hours.

A flock of Western Evening Grosbeaks (*Coccothraustes v. montanus*) were seen in the neighborhood on this date. JOHN M. WILLARD, Oakland, Cal.

Capture of a California Condor Near Pomona, Cal. The taking of a California Condor (*Pseudogryphus californianus*) is always of interest especially when found in the Sierra Madre Mountains, where the former large stock interests have given away to fruit and grain. Occasionally one is shot by hunters in the more remote parts, but as usual with such specimens, they are left to waste owing to lack of knowledge as to their preparation. To Mr. J. Eugene Law's intelligent action I am indebted for a fine specimen which was shot north of Pomona Jan. 16. Mr. Law writes of it in substance as follows: It was first observed about two miles west of Lordsburg, just a mile below San Dimas canyon. When first seen it was flying towards the hills in the direction of Marshall canyon, which is just east of San Dimas, about twenty feet high over the ranch. It flew about 300 yards and then lit on a sycamore to rest, evidently. It was followed and wounded slightly in the wing with a rifle ball, but it flew away and fell, striking the ground of its own weight. Two more rifle shots, one taking effect, failed to kill, the bird moving a short ways after each. After the last it was given two loads from a shot gun with buckshot at 50 feet; then after clubbing it on the head the bird had enough vitality to bite severely. All of these statements are confirmed by the sieve-like condition of the skin, the rifle shot across the breast disturbing at least a pound of flesh. It is an immature bird, as indicated by the dark down-covered neck and head which later becomes yellow and bare; also the imperfect white of the wing linings which later become pure white. The second day after killing the bird weighed 17 pounds. Length, 3 feet, 6½ inches; extent 8 feet, 6½ inches, wing 28½ inches; tail 13½ inches, crop empty. FRANK S. DAGGETT, Pasadena, Cal.

The Sitka Kinglet in California. On November 25, 1900, I secured an adult male specimen (No. 4453 Coll. J. G.) of *Regulus calendula grinnelli* in San Mateo County, California. It was among the redwoods in Pescadero Creek Canyon on the west slope of the Santa Cruz Mountains. This race has been previously recorded only from southeastern Alaska in summer. The present specimen seems to indicate a southward movement in winter, probably following the humid coast belt. When the skin of *grinnelli* is compared with ordinary *calendula*, the differences are at once apparent. In the former, the whole under parts from the base of the bill to, but not including, the crissum are suffused with maize yellow. The back is bright dark olive-green, darkest on top of the head bordering the vermilion crown-patch. The bill is slenderer, and general size much less than in usual specimens of *calendula*. Length, in inches, 3.94; wing, 2.17; tail, 1.76. Among thirty skins of *Regulus calendula* from California so far examined, I find no other specimen approaching this form to any pronounced degree. I would suggest that collectors in California, especially coastwise, look over their material carefully for any similar examples. J. GRINNELL, Palo Alto, Cal.

Shrike Notes. In a railroad cut between Pacific Grove and Point Pinos Light on December 28 last I surprised a California Shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus gambeli*), that was trying to manage a large Limbless Lizard (*Anniella pulchra* Gray.) It would attempt to fly off with its prey, but the muscular, smooth, snake-like lizard repeatedly wriggled out of the shrike's beak. It was after one of these ineffectual attempts that I captured the lizard and discovered the true nature of the animal

that was causing so much trouble. The Limbless Lizard, as its name implies, is destitute of legs. It lives from a few inches to several feet under the earth (usually in sandy soil) and is found most frequently in the vicinity of the small bushes of *Lupinus arboreus*. It has never been observed above soil, and if the shrike has learned to dig the creatures out, then the shrike is possessed of much patience, and the lizards have a formidable enemy. I have often wondered what animals prey upon them. Nothing is known of their life history.

Mr. Wm. L. Atkinson, in THE CONDOR III, page 11, suggests that *Lanius ludovicianus gambeli* does not return to eat impaled food after having once left it. I was of this opinion till last summer (Aug. 8, 1900,) when I noted something to the contrary in Sierra Valley, Cal., (near the town of Vinton, Plumas Co.) The bird in question was, however, *Lanius ludovicianus excubitorides*. I copy essentially what I wrote at the time. "While setting some mammal traps this afternoon I was surprised to see a *Lanius* fly into a sage-brush bush only a few feet from me. It hunted about for a moment till it found an impaled grasshopper, which was first carefully tasted and then quickly bolted. The shrike then flew away, but returned at once and 'tasted' the little twig upon which the grasshopper had been impaled. This it did twice, then whet its its beak vigorously and flew to the top-most twig of the bush, fluffing itself into a round ball.

WALTER K. FISHER, Stanford Univ., Cal.



On the Generic Name of the Californian Condor.

Readers of THE CONDOR may be interested to learn that as early as 1842 the Californian bird was separated generically from the South American species. In that year Lesson began an "Index Ornithologique" which appeared in numerous installments in a Parisian journal, *L'Echo du monde savant* and in the initial part of this "Index" he distinguished the Californian Condor under the name *Gymnogyps*, which name, owing to the rarity of the journal in which it appeared, has been buried for over half a century.

Gymnogyps, having many years priority over *Pseudogryphus*, will become the proper generic term for *Vultur californianus* Shaw, the reference being, *Gymnogyps* Lesson, *L'Echo du monde savant*, ser 2, VI, no. 44, Dec. 8, 1842, col. 1037. This "Echo" was issued about three times a week from 1834-1846, and contains many new generic and specific names of birds. I have been able to consult only part of the series (1838-1843) and would be agreeably surprised to see the remain-

der. Any one who may wish to surprise me should send a copy to the National Museum, Washington, D. C.

CHARLES W. RICHMOND.



We regret being compelled to crowd out the January and March minutes of the Northern Division which will appear in May. However Club members may be informed of some recent actions:—the Club's Bird Bill has been passed by the Senate and has every prospect of passing the Assembly; the Club expects to incorporate at once and members may gauge its prosperity by the fact that 21 new members were elected on March 2.



Mr. Joseph Grinnell, we hear, is to give a course in general ornithology the coming summer at the Hopkins Seaside Laboratory. This course conducted under the auspices of Stanford University, will aim to present the classification, characteristic anatomy, and habits of birds, particular attention being paid to those about Monterey Bay.

We note with much pleasure that *The Osprey* has commenced the Biographies of American Birds projected two years ago by Dr. Gill. Our joy is tinged with sadness, however, when we reflect that *The Osprey* can not complete, with justice to the subject, more than six biographies a year, and hence the series not before A. D. 2030!